

# TENNESSEE BALLOT ACCESS PROCEDURES FOR CANDIDATES FOR U.S. PRESIDENT

## Statewide Party Candidates

No later than the first Tuesday in March (March 6, 2012) in a year in which presidential electors are elected, a Presidential Preference Primary will be held in Tennessee for each statewide political party. TCA §§2-5-205 and 2-13-302. There are two methods by which candidates for nomination to the Presidency by either the Republican or Democratic Party may qualify to appear on the ballot in the Presidential Preference Primary in Tennessee.

- ◆ One method is to be named by the Secretary of State, who is required to submit a list of names to the State Election Commission no later than the first Tuesday in December (December 6, 2011). TCA §2-5-205. The Secretary of State has sole discretion to include only those candidates that he has determined are generally advocated or recognized as candidates in national news media throughout the United States. TCA §2-5-205.
- ◆ The other method for a party candidate to gain access to the primary ballot is to submit a petition signed by at least twenty-five hundred (2,500) registered voters no later than 12:00 noon, prevailing time, on the first Tuesday in December (December 6, 2011). TCA §2-5-205. Petitions may be obtained no more than 90 days before the qualifying deadline date (first date to obtain petition is September 7, 2011). Nominating petitions are to be filed with the State Election Commission and certified duplicates<sup>1</sup> with the Coordinator of Elections (both of these shall be submitted to 312 Rosa L. Parks Ave., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, William Snodgrass Tower, Nashville, Tennessee 37243) and with the chairperson of the state executive committee<sup>2</sup> of the candidate's party by the qualifying deadline. (A party candidate must file one original and two certified duplicates in the respective offices) There are no filing fees.

State Republican Party  
2424 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue South, Suite 200  
Nashville, TN 37212  
(615) 269-4260

State Democratic Party  
1900 Church Street, Suite 203  
Nashville, TN 37203  
(615) 327-9779

The Secretary of State shall advise each of the prospective candidates by the most expeditious means available that, unless a candidate withdraws the candidate's name by 12:00 noon, prevailing time, on the second Tuesday in December (December 13, 2011), the candidate's name will appear on the ballot of the candidate's party in the Presidential Preference Primary. If such a person executes and files with the State Election Commission an affidavit stating without qualification that the candidate is not and does not intend to become a candidate for president in the forthcoming presidential election, the candidate's name shall not be on the ballot. TCA §2-5-205.

On the first Tuesday in March (March 6, 2012) before presidential electors are elected, a Presidential Preference Primary shall be held for each statewide political party to elect delegates to the national conventions of the parties. If no candidate will appear on the primary ballot of a party, then no presidential preference primary shall be held for that political party. TCA §2-13-205.

---

<sup>1</sup> A certified duplicate is a photocopy of the original petition with the words "This is a true copy of the original" signed by the person making the copy along with the copier's name, title and date.

<sup>2</sup> Contact the party executive committee for any additional requirements regarding the certified duplicate.

# TENNESSEE BALLOT ACCESS PROCEDURES FOR CANDIDATES FOR U.S. PRESIDENT

## Independent Candidates

An independent presidential candidate must choose eleven (11) electors. For each of the nine congressional districts in Tennessee, one (1) elector will be elected who is a resident of the congressional district. Two (2) additional electors will be elected who may be residents of any part of the state. TCA §§2-15-101 and 2-15-102.

One nominating petition will be issued to the presidential candidate. The candidate must obtain the signatures and addresses of at least two hundred seventy-five (275) voters registered anywhere within the State of Tennessee. **At the time of filing the nominating petition, the candidate must also file the names, addresses, and signatures of the vice-presidential candidate and the eleven electors who have agreed to represent the presidential candidate.** Petitions may be obtained no more than 90 days before the qualifying deadline date (first date to obtain a petition is May 18, 2012) from the office of the Coordinator of Elections. The filing deadline for petitions is 12:00 NOON, prevailing time, on the third Thursday in August (August 16, 2012). TCA §2-5-101(a).

The original petition must be filed with the State Election Commission and a certified duplicate with the Coordinator of Elections. A certified duplicate is a photocopy of the original petition on which the candidate or the person making the copy writes, "This is a true copy of the original", along with the copier's signature, title and date. (Note: Using blue ink for this affirmation helps identity that the copy is a certified duplicate). Both the original and certified copy shall be submitted to the following address:

Division of Elections  
312 Rosa L. Parks Ave.  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor, William R. Snodgrass Tower  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243  
(615) 741-7956

A postmark **will not** suffice. TCA §§2-5-101(a), 2-5-103(a) and 2-1-108.

## **Election Procedures**

The voters of Tennessee will vote for a presidential candidate who shall have pledged to him or her eleven (11) presidential electors. Voters will vote for the presidential candidate of the voter's choice. The electors pledged to the presidential candidate receiving the highest number of votes are elected to represent Tennessee in the Electoral College. TCA §§2-15-101 and 102.

## **Campaign Contribution and Disclosure Reports**

All presidential candidates should contact the Federal Election Commission (1-800-424-9530 #4) for information regarding campaign contribution and disclosure reports and filing requirements. If campaign expenditures are made in Tennessee, the FEC requires presidential candidates to make certain filings in Tennessee with the Bureau of Ethics and Campaign Finance. The Bureau's address is as follows:

404 James Robertson Parkway  
Suite 104  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-1360  
(615) 741-7959

## **Tennessee Election Code**

Copies of the 2009 Tennessee Election Code may be obtained by sending, to the Coordinator of Elections, a check for \$30.82 payable to the Secretary of State. To obtain the text of statutes amended in 2010 and 2011, visit the link below:

<http://www.michie.com/tennessee/lpext.dll?f=templates&fn=main-h.htm&cp=tncode> click Title 2 and then the appropriate code section. A returned check/collection agency fee of \$25.00 will be assessed for every check not honored by the bank.